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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/789,792	02/27/2004	Jean-Manuel Gomes	R029	9458
26158	7590	11/29/2006	EXAMINER	
WOMBLE CARLYLE SANDRIDGE & RICE, PLLC ATTN: PATENT DOCKETING 32ND FLOOR P.O. BOX 7037 ATLANTA, GA 30357-0037				ELKINS, GARY E
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
		3782		

DATE MAILED: 11/29/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/789,792	GOMES ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Gary E. Elkins	3782	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 September 2006.  
 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 41-47,58-67,72 and 74-77 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 41-47,58-67,72 and 74-77 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .                                    |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>20060915</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
|   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

1. Claims 64-67, 72 and 74 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 64, lines 23 and 29, claim 65, line 23 and claim 66, “the bottom tear line” lacks antecedent basis in the claims, i.e. the element is only inferentially set forth.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 41-47, 58-60, 62 and 63 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Auclair '277.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 64-67, 72 and 74-77 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by Auclair '277 or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Auclair '277 in view of either Sutherland '316 or Spivey et al '903. Auclair discloses a bottom line 83 which is considered to be "generally parallel" to the bottom panel. With respect to claims 64-67, 72 and 74, no distinction is seen between the bottom line in Auclair and that claimed as a result of the claimed intended use of the line as a tear line or fold line, i.e. the bottom line 83 in Auclair is considered capable of folding and tearing. Alternatively, each of Sutherland and Spivey et al teaches that it is known to make the bottom tear/fold line in a removable end section of a container parallel to the bottom panel of a dispensing carton. It would have been obvious to make the bottom tear line in Auclair parallel to the bottom of the carton as taught by either Sutherland or Spivey et al to allow folding out of the removable section prior to complete removal from the carton. Both the tearing out and folding of side dispensing flaps in can cartons is known in this art.

6. Claim 61 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Auclair '277 in view of Lingamfelter '293. Auclair discloses all structure of the claimed carton except twelve containers within the carton in a three by four arrangement. Lingamfelter teaches that it is known to package cans in a carton using a three by four arrangement. It would have been obvious to make the carton in Auclair to hold the cans in a three by four arrangement as taught by Lingamfelter as a mere selection of how many cans one wishes to package and since such an arrangement is economically acceptable and a common arrangement in the art.

***Response to Arguments***

7. The withdrawal of the indication of allowable subject matter in light of the newly cited patent publication to Auclair '277 as applied above is regretted. The remarks are moot with respect to the newly applied rejections.

***Conclusion***

In order to reduce pendency and avoid potential delays, Technology Center 3700 is encouraging FAXing of responses in Office Actions to (571)273-8300. This practice may be used for filing papers not requiring a fee. It may also be used for filing papers which require a fee by Applicants who authorize charges to a PTO deposit account. Please identify the Examiner and art unit at the top of your cover sheet.

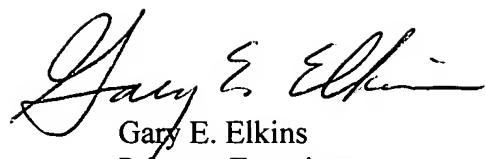
Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. Also, copies of an office action or other file information may be obtained from the Private PAIR system. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions regarding access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communication from the Examiner should be directed to Gary Elkins at telephone number (571)272-4537. The Examiner can normally be reached Monday through Thursday.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Mr. Nathan Newhouse can be reached at (571)272-4544.

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Gary E. Elkins  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3727

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21 November 2006